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DANDELION DANCETHEATER
and the Sierra Nevada Research Institute
present

Experiments from the *Creative Risk Project*

"Art that reveals and reveals through intimacy and lack of pretense."
-Michael Wade Simpson, SF Chronicle

Wawona Village, August 11, 2009 – All of the most important discoveries in the history of science and the arts have depended on at least one person being willing to take major risks. None of the discoveries of Galileo, Newton, Edison, Einstein, nor the compositions of Beethoven, Mozart, Leonard Bernstein, John Cage, nor the performance breakthroughs of Stanislavski, Grotowski, Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, or Robert Wilson would have come into being without significant risk-taking. Yet, the pressures of contemporary funding, job security and prestige for scientists and artists force so many to shy away from bold leaps into the unknown. Edison declared, in response to the proposition that his 2,000 or so failed experiments in search of a working light bulb were wastes of time, "Nonsense! Now we know 2,000 ways that it doesn't work." Creative pioneers must be encouraged to take more risks.

In 2006 a group of artists and scientist from the Bay Area and Wawona Village met to contemplate, discuss and experiment in the nature of risk taking and creativity. Three years later, key collaborators Eric Kupers (San Francisco), Patrick Cress (Oakland) and Eric Berlow (Wawona Village) are still talking, and on August 19th they are hosting a free performance of art which they feel exemplifies components of what they've termed the *Creative Risk Project*, namely risk taking and the expansion of discipline and form.

The event is scheduled at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, Aug. 19 at Wawona's Grey Barn and is open to the public. Musician Patrick Cress will perform music woven from field recordings from alpine meadows, toads, and humans with saxophone and clarinet, and San Francisco's Dandelion Dancetheater will perform experts from their newest work *MUTT*.

MUTT is a dance-play that collides new music, piercing physicality and dreamlike story-telling to examine the liquid realm of in-between. The work follows the story of Miyo, a mixed-race girl born in an Internment Camp during WWII to a Japanese American internee and a Caucasian prison guard from Texas, and takes place during the 49 days after her death. Miyo's "Bardo", a liminal state that is believed by many Buddhist cultures to be what we all experience in-between our death and our next life, is a strange, "after-hours" honky-tonk inhabited by a motley crew of spirits, an undead country band, and various characters from her life. This surreal dance-play takes Miyo into many surprising, off-kilter and absurd situations inspired by states of in-between where she wrestles with issues and ghosts from her last identity as she faces terrifying questions about future identities. *MUTT* switches fluidly back and forth from English to Japanese, utilizing language as raw sound and texture and realizing the themes of mixed-identity and in-between with language. Co-directed by Kimiko Guthrie and Eric Kupers of Dandelion Dancetheater, the work includes different styles of European-American and Japanese dance, music, and theater.

This performance is supported by UC Merced's Sierra Nevada Research Institute, the Nature Sounds Society, the Japan Foundation, the SF Arts Commission, the Wattis Foundation, the Princess Grace Foundation and ODC Theater. For more information, please visit www.dandeliondancetheater.org

*"Dandelion Dancetheater's "MUTT" is mad and maddening,
a wild whirl of song, text, visual design and movement...
the troupe flew around the small stage like a whacked-out band of travelers.
Sometimes merry, sometimes considerably more sinister, sometimes rather irritating;
always demanding to be seen."
- Claudia La Rocco, New York Times, July 17 2009*

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About Dandelion Dancetheater

Through dance, collided with experimental theater, video, writing, music, and image, Dandelion Dancetheater aims a kinesthetic microscope at the ever-changing intricacies of the human heart. Its work is emotionally driven and grounded in a fascination with the intersections of bold risk-taking and public accessibility. The company, which was founded in 1996, is committed to the individual and combined artistic visions of Kimiko Guthrie and Eric Kupers. It views the bodily exploration of human vulnerability, strength and paradox as a potent means for personal and collective growth, and through teaching and creating with people of diverse sizes, shapes, ages, cultures and abilities, Dandelion Dancetheater allow viewers of all walks of life to find themselves reflected in its work.